

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, UK, FR

SUBJECT: INTERIM COLEMAN DECISION ON CONCORDE

1. AT 12:30 NEWS CONFERENCE NOV 13, SECRETARY OF
TRANSPORTATION COLEMAN RELEASED EIS AND ANNOUNCED THAT
HE WOULD CONDUCT HEARING ON JAN 5 WITH DECISION TO
FOLLOW WITHIN 30 DAYS. (DURING QUESTION PERIOD HE
ADDED HE WOULD PUT REASONS FOR HIS DECISION IN WRITING.)

2. TEXT OF COLEMAN STATEMENT:

BRITISH AIRWAYS AND AIR FRANCE HAVE ASKED FOR PERMISSION
TO CONDUCT COMMERCIAL CONCORDE OPERATIONS TO AND FROM
THE UNITED STATES AND HAVE STATED THAT THEY INTEND TO
HAVE SIX FLIGHTS PER DAY, FOUR TO LAND AT KENNEDY
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN NEW YORK, AND TWO TO LAND AT
DULLES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, JUST OUTSIDE WASHINGTON, D.C.

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THE CONCORDE IS A SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT BUT THE APPLICANTS

HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT ALL OPERATIONS OVER THE UNITED STATES WILL BE AT SUB-SONIC SPEEDS. THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION HAS ADVISED ME THAT CONCORDE OPERATIONS WOULD MEET ALL APPROPRIATE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.

SINCE THIS IS A MAJOR FEDERAL ACTION, THE FAA PREPARED

AND CIRCULATED A PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT. AFTER PUBLIC HEARINGS ANOTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT IS BEING ISSUED TODAY WHICH TREATS THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN A FORTHRIGHT MANNER.

PRIOR TO MAKING A DECISION, I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST FOR ME TO OUTLINE THE ISSUES AS I SEE THEM AS RAISED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT, ALONG WITH THE SAFETY AND INTERNATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS, AND HAVE SIX HOURS OF ARGUMENT BY THOSE CONCERNED SO THAT THESE ISSUES CAN BE DISCUSSED PUBLICLY.

I AM PUBLISHING AN OUTLINE OF THE ISSUES IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER AND I AM PASSING OUT A COPY HEREWITH. AS YOU WILL NOTE, THE DATE FOR THE PUBLIC ARGUMENT WILL BE ON JANUARY 5, 1976, COMMENCING AT 9:30 A.M. AND I WILL MAKE A DECISION WITHIN 30 DAYS THEREAFTER. THE CONCORDE REPRESENTS NEW TECHNOLOGY, AND AS IN THE CASE OF ANY NEW TECHNOLOGY, VARIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION IS ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL OFFICE TO HANDLE ALL PUBLIC INQUIRIES CONCERNING THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.

END TEXT.

3. EIS AND ISSUES OUTLINE BEING POUCHED.

4. QUESTION PERIOD LASTED NEARLY AN HOUR BUT COVERED LITTLE NEW GROUND. COLEMAN DID SAY PRESIDENT HAD INSTRUCTED HIM SIMPLY TO DECIDE TO BEST OF HIS ABILITY. LATER HE NOTED THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD DISCUSSED MATTER WITH HIM, SETTING FORTH FRENCH AND BRITISH UNCLASSIFIED

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CONCERNS, INCLUDING AVOIDING DELAY, BUT, SAID COLEMAN, KISSINGER DID NOT SUGGEST HOW HE SHOULD DECIDE THE OPERATING SPECIFICATIONS QUESTION. KISSINGER

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